

in a large number of tables, and are summarised in a series of propositions, the substance of which is finally expressed in the statement that "no marked relation has been found between the intelligence, physique or disease of the offspring and parental alcoholism in any of the categories investigated: on the whole the balance turns as often in favour of the alcoholic as of the non-alcoholic parentage."

This conclusion differs so widely from the results obtained in direct studies of alcoholic families that it is natural to suspect that the divergence may be due to some difference in the character of the data in the two cases; and an examination of the memoir suggests at once that the most probable source of this difference lies in the criterion of parental alcoholism. The medical observations which led to the belief that parental intoxications are a cause of filial degeneracy dealt with instances in which it was definitely established (i) that chronic intoxication really existed, and (ii) that it existed prior to the birth of the children. In the memoir under review no reference whatever seems to be made to the second of these points, while with regard to the first the evidence is utterly inadequate. The authors, indeed, appear to have some suspicion of this, for they point out that "by the term alcoholism in this paper is not necessarily meant the chronic alcoholism of medical literature." But they continue, "we believe that many, possibly the majority, of our drinking class would be found to suffer more or less from chronic alcoholism; they at any rate in the opinion of trained social workers—assisted by the judgment of police and employers—are drinking more than is good for them or their homes." But it is obvious that an opinion of this kind is not much evidence of the existence of chronic intoxication; nor is our estimate of its value from this point of view increased by closer examination of the data. For we then learn not only that this parental intoxication has no evil effect on the offspring, but also that it fails to produce any marked physical or mental inferiority in the drinker himself, which would hardly be the case if we were concerned with chronic alcoholism in the medical sense. And again, the proportion of alcoholic individuals amongst the parents reaches a figure which would be quite inconceivable if the term really indicated that they were suffering from chronic intoxication, though it might be probable enough as expressing—what it doubtless does express—the personal judgment of an investigator possibly with a teetotal bias or at all events not in perfect sympathy with convivial tendencies. It is only in this way, for instance, that we can explain the fact that, as appears from the tables dealing with the refraction of the Edinburgh school children, over 64 per cent. of the boys had alcoholic fathers and over 34 per cent. alcoholic mothers.

On the whole, then, it is difficult to see how even the most accurate statistical methods could extract from data of this character any conclusions which should outweigh the results of direct observation and experiment.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

Doflein, FRANZ, Professor of Zoology at the University of München. *Wir und die Japaner*. Ernst Reinhardt, München, 1910; pp. 32. Price 6d.

AN address, reminding us of Prof. Pearson's lecture to the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society in 1900 on National Life from the Standpoint of Science, was delivered a short time ago by Prof. Doflein to an audience composed of students of the University, Technical College, and Academy of Arts in München. The lecturer's experiences and observations in Ceylon, China and Japan, have been recorded in *Ostasienfahrt*, an admirable publication which has been ranked by an enthusiastic German reviewer second only to Darwin's *Naturalist's Voyage Round the World*. "We and the Japanese," which might also, with advantage, have been addressed to the adolescent manhood of this country, steers clear alike of being an insolent

declaration of the superiority of the white race, or a panic-stricken warning of the yellow peril.

The idea that fifty years ago the Japanese were semi-barbarians was one of the gravest errors of European public opinion. On the contrary, all the elements of our own civilisation were existent: administration, civil service, priesthood, army, education, science, art, industry, organised commerce and shipping—an effete civilisation, it is true, but the conditions for a strong development were there. The success of the Japanese nation has been due to three circumstances: the excellent qualities of the race, the rational utilisation of these qualities, and the eminent ability of its leaders. The latter came of excellent stock, and their education tended to develop self-control, concentration on an ideal, perseverance and love of country. The people these men were called to lead were healthy, plain-living, industrious. Their main characteristic was an intense feeling of social responsibility, “a life of each for weal of all.”

Is it surprising, then, that Japan has prevented the white races from assuming tutelage over the yellow races? And if three hundred millions are entering on a phase of development that at present justifies the expression ‘yellow peril,’ then the waking up of the Far East must be the alarm for an equally vigorous waking up of the white races.

If the multiplication of the unfit be discouraged in Europe, if the rising generation emulate the yellow races in their practical idealism, if unity between the white races be fostered, there will be no necessity for considering whether we are to be superseded by the Mongolians. Even if we do show signs of decadence, was Japan in a better plight sixty years ago? A handful of able young men and women with a set and steadfast purpose can stem the downward movement of a nation and direct it again towards the ideal.

J. H. K.

Parr, ROBERT J. *Beyond the Law.* 40, Leicester Square, W.C.; 1909; pp. 16; 1d.

THE Director of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children draws attention to some facts on illegitimacy in Ireland. The Bastardy Acts are not applicable to Ireland, and, at the present, there is no chance of obtaining from the putative father “reasonable relief at a time of great need, except under conditions that make it practically impossible for a poor woman to avail herself of them.” A number of cases are quoted to emphasise the importance of something being done to give to the unmarried Irish mother the same opportunities for redress, however limited, which her unfortunate English sister ‘enjoys.’

“An even greater wrong is being done to the children born under the triple disadvantage of shame, poverty and physical risk. Many are doomed from birth, others struggle through an enfeebled existence, and a certain proportion become a national encumbrance. National burdens caused by the necessity for caring for the unfit press heavily. One of the most effective means of lightening these burdens for the next and succeeding generations is, surely, to take such precautions as may be possible to prevent the number of the unfit from increasing in such proportions as they have hitherto been permitted to do.”

J. H. K.

Platzhoff-Lejeune. *Kinder-und Mutter-Rechtsschutz in der Schweiz.* “Die neue Generation,” VI. 5. 1910.

THE codification of German civil laws (*Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch*) will be followed in 1912 by the Swiss *Civilgesetzbuch*, which will replace the heterogeneous, and frequently mediæval cantonal laws by a federal civil code. A